



GALATIANS

VERSE-BY-VERSE



SESSION 17 | GALATIANS 6:1-6

GALATIANS 6:1-10 | PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION

- Verse 1 –
 - Typical in Paul's letters is a closing section with practical advice on a number of life-issues.
 - Paul begins by giving brief instructions for those **overtaken in a fault**.
 - The verb **overtaken** is in the passive form, but it would be hard to argue that the advice is not valid for those who *pursue sin* actively. The command for the **spiritual** is to **restore such a one**.
 - This refers to *faults*. Some have attempted to divide the various words for sin and claim that restoration is only valid for *faults*. Such dissecting of words seems to be founded on weak evidence.
 - Paul gives no instruction on how to go about the restoration, likely because such work is always contextual.
 - However, he does warn that the work of restoration requires two things.
 - First a **spirit of meekness**, (see notes on v. 23) thus a *soft pliability*. Those who are *rigid* are rarely suited for the task.
 - Second, do the work **considering thyself**. The word translated **considering** is σκοπος [skopos], implying "keeping an eye on yourself," **lest thou also be tempted**.
 - The church would be infinity richer if it had this careful spirit of restoration.
- Verse 2 –
 - The word translated **burden** implies weight, things that are heavy, but not always in a physical sense.
 - The word is used in Acts 15:28 to speak of the burdens laid upon the Gentiles by the Jerusalem assembly after the Jerusalem council.
 - It is also used in 2 Corinthians 4:17 to speak about the **eternal weight of glory** that outshines **our light affliction, which is but for a moment**.
 - Thus, in this instruction, the believer is called upon to help their fellow believers with the "heavy" things, be they spiritual, emotional, or physical.
 - When this is done, **the law of Christ** is fulfilled. What is this law? It is certainly not the Mosaic law. Likely a reference to and explanation of John 13:34 and John 15:12.
 - Both of the John passages as well as this give emphasis to the *one another*, and thus are not necessarily a command to bear *everyone's* burdens.
 - This passage has been used by many as a "biblical basis" for social justice. Doing so ignores the *one another* aspect of the passage, and suffers from the eisegesis of the social justice warrior.
 - One example: Whitney Parnell – Sojourners blog, September 1, 2017, *To Our White Friends: Empathy Is Not Enough*-

When I reflect on my faith, I am particularly drawn toward how Christ was the strongest example of what he calls us to be as his followers of love, through a lens of shared humanity and social justice. He demonstrated profound empathy, for example, in weeping with those who mourned, but also firmly stated that we are called to follow the gospel by taking responsibility in joining and supporting those who suffer. "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ," he said (Galatians 6:2). Thus, I believe that allyship [becoming allies] is a charge of this faith and should be an active way of life that commits to ensuring social justice for everyone. (<https://sojo.net/articles/our-white-friends-empathy-not-enough> - accessed February 6, 2020)

- Verse 3 –
 - Paul continues in a “bullet list” of practical insight.
 - This verse needs no explanation: self-deception is what happens when we do not have a Biblical and humble view of ourselves. This self-deception could be manifested in other ways, but one of the most common is the arrogance of thinking *more highly of ourselves than we ought*.
 - Point of consideration: *why does KJV use **think** rather than “thinketh,” as in Philipians 3:4 and Proverbs 23:7?*
 - The *likely* answer is that these verb endings were already becoming archaic by 1611.
 - The KJV translators “rule #1” was “1. The ordinary Bible, read in the church, commonly called the Bishop’s Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit.”
 - When the KJV quoted Bishops, they used the endings. When they did not, they “modernized.”
- Verses 4-5 –
 - These two verses are a remedy for the one who has the deception of verse 3 (this is based on the conjunction **but**).
 - The word **prove** is δοκιμάζω [dokimazo] and the word **think** (v. 3) is δοκέω [dokeo], thus both obviously related.
 - Both words are *thought* words.
 - Our English word *docetic* comes from this Greek word.
 - The false doctrine of *docetism* is the belief that Jesus only *seemed* to die on the cross.
 - In the end, the remedy for thinking you are *seemingly* something is to simply use your own work as the standard, and then you rejoice in your own progress rather than gloat that you are better than another.
 - In this light, Paul says, **every man shall bear his own burden**.
 - The Greek word for **burden** here is different from verse 2.
 - Here the emphasis is on the things that must be carried, whether heavy or light.
 - The word is φορτίον [phortion], from which we get the English word *portion*.
- Verse 6 –
 - Paul was a believer in a “paid clergy” (see also 1 Cor. 9:9-14, 1 Tim 5:17-18).
 - The words translated **taught** and **teacheth** are variations of κατηχέω [katecho], which is the intensifying prefix *kata* and the verb *to have*. Thus it could be paraphrased, “the one who helps you to *fully get it*.” The teachers role is to guide the student to fully comprehend.
 - The students who are **taught in the word** – *logos*, rather than *graphe* - with the emphasis on *meaning*.
 - The students are to **communicate** to the teacher **in all good things**.
 - The word **communicate** is from the Greek κοινωνέω [koinoneo], which is “to have things in common.” The original Latin *commūnicāre* was “to have a share in.”
 - When teachers study, students benefit!
 - Note that Paul encourages *teaching*, not “leadership” and the myriad of other activities for which today’s “clergy” receive their salary.